Forging of Indian Passport

1795. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that forging of the Indian Passports, mainly substituting digitally embossed photographs, is becoming rampant in the Gulf;

(b) whether it is also a fact that just within six months the emigration authorities at Thiruvananthapuram alone detained 77 persons on the charges of using fake passports; and

(c) what measures Government are taking to control this menace?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) No cases of forging of Indian passports, mainly substituting digitally embossed photographs have been reported by our Missions in Gulf.

(b) and (c) During year 2005, Emigration Authorities at Thiruvananthapuram detained 134 persons on charges of using fake passports and now the Government have taken steps to ensure that there are enough Security features in Indian passports making it very difficult, if not impossible, to forge it.

SAARC Summit in Dhaka

1796. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chinese proposal to join the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation came up for consideration at the recent SAARC Summit in Dhaka;

(b) if so, whether India supported the move, if so, on what items; and

(c) what was the consensus that reached on the issue in the SAARC Summit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) to (c) The 13th SAARC Summit held in Dhaka on November 12-13, 2005 agreed, in principle, that the

People's Republic of China may be associated as Observer. The Summit further decided that the modalities regarding Observer status will be decided at the twenty-seventh meeting of the SAARC Council of Minister in July, 2006.

Electric detonators with Indian Nationals

1797. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some Indian nationals were carrying 61,858 electric detonators for L.T.T.E. on 25th January, 2006; and

(b) whether there is any co-relation between this and off loading of six containers of explosives in sea by MV Egria in December, 2005?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) According to the reports available with this Ministry, the Sri Lankan Navy intercepted a fishing dhow on January 25, 2006 in Sri Lankan territorial waters, and found 5 Indian fishermen with 61,056 electric detonators in their possession.

(b) There is no information available in this regard.

Acquisition of land for Foreign Mission

1798. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether during 2003-04, there have been gross lack of diligence by his Ministry in the matters of acquisition of properties abroad as well as in India for its missions and sub-ordinate offices;

(b) whether Government have also failed to acquire land in Addis Ababa and Algiers on reciprocal basis from the Government of Ethiopia and Algeria;

(c) whether Government have in place a mechanism to exercise effective control over missions/posts abroad to ensure avoidance of irregular expenditure on rented accommodation in excess of prescribed rental ceilings; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?